MEGALOPOLOLISM

American magazines are all under the same corporate control. If you have any doubt, look at the ads in them and think about the cost of those ads. Anyone starting a new magazine has to deal with the same advertisers and, guess what?--they won't advertise unless you print their party line. When Gloria Steinem was soliciting ads to keep MS. afloat, she found that the majors not only wanted to control *where* their ad appeared but they wanted editorial say-so as well. Steinem surveyed the major mags and found most of them were 60% or more ads and that the content of the mags was often nothing but disguised hype for the products advertised. People were paying three to five bucks for hard copies of the same ads shown on prime time tv and no one was evaluating the worth of these products to the consumer. Sexism, racism, and homophobism were built into the ad structure and the power brokers in the liquor, tobacco, and junk food megalopolies were about as enlightened as eighteenth century plantation owners. Ms. sold out and accepted sexist cigarette ads for awhile, but folded anyway. This year the mag returned with no ads and a higher price tag. Whether they can make it or not will depend upon the readers.

What good does it do to start a magazine if you sell your right to say what you want to say before you begin? I'm not talking about Ms. at this point, but any magazine. One of the most unusual things about the first wave of underground comix in the sixties was their lack of advertising. In 1968 the East coast comics were nearly half advertising and the rest was filled with continuing stories about characters who were nothing but products. Would it surprise you to know that DC comics survived on the royalties from licensed products, namely Superman stuff, and would have gone under long ago if they had nothing to sell but comic books? I hate to see my favorite characters associated with products. What if I don't like the product? When I was a kid Superman was associated with a breakfast cereal. If you bought it, you got a comic character pin. I wanted the little pins, because I collected everything, but I hated the cereal. Well, my mother wasn't nuts. Why buy a cereal no one would eat? I had a tough time getting those pins. I think I traded other kids out of the ones I did get, but to this day Superman reminds me of a shitty breakfast cereal.

BUTT BISCUIT 1 is 50¢/stamp from Dean Williams, 555 E. William #9-F, Ann Arbur, MI 48104.

While I was visiting my mother in Lincoln, Nebraska in October, I picked up a copy of 4-MOST COMICS 1990, a nice DZ. I'd tell you how to get one, but like a lot of mini-publishers, the folks who put this on out did not put an address in the book.

There were only two Ninja Turtles represented at the annual Scarecrow Contest at The Nut Tree in Vacaville, California, this October. Raphael and Michelangelo. Sorry about that, Leonardo. Must be a character flaw. Cheer up. Most popular costumes for the under-five trick-or-treaters are Ninja Turtles, all of them.

CLAY GEERDES' COMIX PLUGOLA

CLAY GEERDES' COMIX WAVE 96 © 1990. P. O. Box 7094, Berkeley, CA 94707. World Rights Reserved. Artwork and quoted material herein © the artists concerned. Used here for promotional purposes only. $8 for the next twelve issues. Set of back issues $35 postpaid.

CORPORATE DADDY

At this time in American history corporations are more important in raising children than parents. Let's start with infant formula--a destructive and costly displacement of the best food infants could ever consume. Let's go to war toys. Let's go to overmedication to tranquilize the superactive kiddies. Let's move to seven-and-eight-year-old-girls being taught cosmetics by the cosmetic industry so they can learn to be proper objects and subjects later in life. Let's move to music. However much we may like it, it's designed to blot out the mind walking down the street with the Walkman, never allowing a true reflection that might take the place of the sonic assault. Let's move to the addictions: tobacco, alcohol, the drug dealers, the television shows that show kids at an early age that violence is the answer to irritations and problems, and in between the violent shows they are taught what to eat, mainly high food--high fat, high salt, high sugar diets--with additives and chemicals, all the kind of food that predisposes them to bad health later in life and gets them flabby and obese.

Who's raising the kids? Kindercare is raising them. McDonald's is feeding them. HBO and Disneyland are entertaining them. They are spending more time with corporate products and services and entertainment and addictions than they do with adults. Now that's got to have an effect on them. It's got to twist and distort their values and rupture their sense of history. This is what it means to grow up corporate. The commercial media today say to the young in America who are civilly concerned, we will cover you only if you break the law, if you take over buildings, if you block traffic, if you smash windows--then you will get on the network news. But if you do research, if you have news conferences, if you lobby, if you litigate, it's not exciting enough. That's really quite a message.

RALPH NADER

If you think your dog has it tough, check out some of the dog cartoons in David Sipress' THE SECRET LIFE OF DOGS. $5.95 at your bookstore. A Plume original from Penguin.

It is curious that nearly all the great fortunes are made by turning beautiful things into ugly ones.

E. Nesbit.

I'm enjoying the new Classics Illustrated series from First Comics. Eric Vincent sent me a copy of THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU and the art is very impressive.

5 O'CLOCK SHADOW 4 is $1 pp from Not Available Comics, 3867 Bristow, Detroit, MI 48212. Features a Big Boy story by Matt Madden.

MAN HOLE by Jonathan Resh is 30¢/stamp from 1202 SW 1st Ave. Apt. G, Gainesville, FLA 32601.

DIDI GLITZES COMIC RELIEF

Diane Noomin will sign copies of TRUE GLITZ at Comic Relief, 2138 University Ave., in Berkeley on November 3 from 3-5 PM. Rip Off Press published TRUE GLITZ. $3.75 pp from ROP, POB 4686, Auburn, CA 95604. To order by phone, call toll free 800-TRY-COMIX. Age Statement required for all orders of underground comix.

baby sue
HATEFUL, VIOLENT, SADISTIC HUMOR
Subscription (4 issues) $8.00
Baby Sue T-shirt (M, L, XL) $9.00
NUMBLES cassette $7.00
(10 new LAMOP songs)
Send cash or check made to "cash."

There are four issues of BABY SUE and you can get them for $8 from POB 1111, Decatur, GA 30031-1111. #4 has interviews with Ace Backwards and Mary Fleener.

BUZZARD 2 features the newest work of Steve Lafler and Stephen Beaupre. $4 pp from Cathead Comics, POB 576, Hudson, MA 01749.

DISHMAN 9 is $1 pp from John MacLeod, POB 671, Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1H-6L3.

Penguin has just released a collection of Leigh Rubin's panels, CALVES CAN BE SO CRUEL. It's $5.95 at your local bookstore.

WARTS AND ALL by Josh Alan and Drew Friedman is $9.95. Drew's caricatures have enhanced many issues of SPY, NATIONAL LAMPOON, and RAW. The page of comic shop clerks destroyed me.

YOUR SHEIKNESS--WE HAVE ARRIVED TO DEFEND THE SOVEREIGN OIL, I MEAN SOIL, OF YOUR KINGDOM AND YOUR UNLEADED, UH--UNFETTERED WAY OF LIFE FROM THE VISCOSITY, ER, UH, VENALITY OF OUR CRUDE AND UNREFINED ENEMY
..... AT YOUR SERVICE YOUR GREASE...GRACE...
M.WARRIOR

FOX AND CROW REVISITED

I enjoyed reading your blurb on REAL SCREAM COMICS. Nobody else has ever mentioned the tie-in with the Fox and the Crow. They were kind of grade-B animals anyway--all the top performers were signed up by Dell except those owned by Harvey, or course--but they were the best DC could do when they went shopping for funny animal cartoon characters to spin off comics. Probably Tito and his Burro [Tito and his Burrito--ed.] were more famous movie stars in the beginning, but the Fox and the Crow soon became the comic book's best-read feature. In the early issues they actually portrayed themselves--animated movie stars, "toons," I guess--relaxing at home. The Crow was always trying to rip off the Fox--"chisel" was his word. In the beginning, refrigerators full of food were the prize, later it was dollars. The refrigerators came from the cartoon features. The notion of some ne'er-do-well chiseling food from a hard-working individual was a common theme in '40's cartoons. I have often tried to puzzle out if this demonstrated some deep difficulty of thinking that might be mirrored in statistical studies of eating disorders and heart disease, or interpreted by some sage of consumption as the harbinger of the greedy society that America became in the '40's. The Fox and Crow were Aesop's characters, of course, but like other creatures were given a Twentieth Century twist; now mice are not timid but brave and resourceful, enemies equal to the cat's strength. So Fauntleroy Fox, though not stupid, is not so smart as Aesop's animal, either. Fox is blinded by his bourgeois reverence for authority and order and cannot see through Crow's chiselling tricks. Crow, disguised with huge moustache and sheriff's star: "I'm da tax collector. Youse owe me for air tax. Foz: "Air tax? When has there been a tax on air?" Crow: "For years now and youse owe back taxes so pay up." And bewildered Fox, not wanting to break the law, does. Crow feels no compunction about any of this, he lives to chisel and must best the Fox if his life is to have meaning. John Pound once drew a Crow spin-off name Flip the Boid, who was so amoral that it was satisfying to see him wasted in his first adventure. But Crow wasn't that bad, just fulfilling his part in the particular social ecology of that comic, just living out the role assigned in his animal dialectic---when I wanted to do a strip about class-conscious animals, I naturally reflected on the Fox and the Crow and tried to spell out the relationship between Jim Davis's comic and mine in the title. You were the only guy to see it, Clay. Ars longa, memory shorta.

Mike Culpepper

Fox and Crow cartoon and comic book history

The Fox and the Crow were created by Disney-trained animator George Tashlin when he took over the cartoon unit at Columbia Studios in 1941. They were introduced in THE FOX AND THE GRAPES (Dec. 5, 1941). Bob Wickersham took over the Fox and Crow in late 1942, directing TOLL BRIDGE TROUBLES (11/27/42). He did six in 1943: SLAY IT WITH FLOWERS (1/8/43); PLENTY BELOW ZERO (5/14/43); TREE FOR TWO (6/21/43); A HUNTING WE WON'T GO (8/23/43); ROOM AND BORED (9/30/43); and WAY DOWN YONDER IN THE CORN (11/25/43). Four were done in 1944: THE DREAM KIDS (2/5/44); MR. MOOCHER (9/8/44); BE PATIENT, PATIENT (10/27/44); and THE EGG YEGG (12/8/44). There were three in 1945: KU-KUNUTS (3/30/45); TREASURE JEST (8/30/45); and PHONEY BALONEY (9/13/45). Three in 1946: FOXEY FLATFOOTS (4/11/46); UNSURE RUNTS (5/16/46); and MYSTO FOX (8/29/46). There were none in either 1947 or '48 and the final Fox and Crow was directed by Alex Lovy, GRAPE NUTTY (4/14/49). Going by Leonard Maltin's count in OF MICE AND MAGIC, there were twenty Fox and Crows. The characters were used later by UPA before Mr. Magoo and Gerald McBoingBoing and other more humanesque characters took over. Chuck Jones Wiley E. Coyote was based on Fauntleroy Fox.

REAL SCREEN COMICS began in the Spring of 1945 and ran for 128 issues, ending in 1959, though it ran for another 9 issues as TV SCREEN COMICS. FOX AND CROW were popular enough characters that DC gave them their own title in December of 1951, two years after the last cartoon from Columbia's Screen Gems. It ran for 108 issues, and became STANLEY AND HIS MONSTER in 1968.

Fox and Crow were always favorites of mine, Mike. I saw all of these cartoons when I was a kid and remember them affectionately. The pattern comes more from Mark Twain than Aesop. Crawford Crow was a flim flam man and his prototype appears in HUCKLEBERRY FINN in several forms. Crow is like Tom Sawyer suckering other kids to paint the fence for him. He's a snake oil salesman, a con man. Fact is, Crow doesn't really want anything Fox has. His lifestyle is radically different. He lives on the wing and he wouldn't be happy sitting in Fox's chair at all. This was always the fascinating thing about these stories. Crow hustles because he enjoys the game. The Fox usually gets it back in the end and that's the point for me. It is his fate to devote his life to security and comfort, while the Crow is out there living it up in the rough. Of the two, Crow is closer to his true nature, because in nature the fox is always on the prowl, never sitting in comfort. A lot of people were forced to live like Crow in the depression thirties and the cartoons with those full refrigerators reflect the memories of animators who often went home to empty ones. Historically, America didn't become a greedy society in the forties. Those were the war years and Americans were fighting the Nazis and the Italian fascists and Hirohito's army. As I remember it, everything was rationed and people had to have coupons and stamps to buy gas, sugar, butter, and other necessities. When the war ended in 1944 and 1945 and rationing was ended, there was an orgy or spending that must have appeared pretty greedy, but it was, in fact, simply a reaction to many years of deprivation. Today, the ruling elite in this country is greedy as hell and I'm sure any homeless person would identity with Crow in a minute. Fox would be seen as the self-satisfied guy who has his and could care less about those who are unemployed and on the skids.

There is a racial aspect to Fox and Crow that must be dealt with. Disney used crows as black people in DUMBO and three decades later Robert Crumb did the same thing in his FRITZ THE CAT. When Fritz was animated by Ralph Bakshi, he used the same symbolism. Maybe that's why we never see Fox and Crow cartoons on television. Too close to reality. Maybe the powers that decide such things think we would see Crow as the black man trying to get a piece of the big white pie. This is not true of the cartoon at all. Tashlin was simply imitating the success of Bugs Bunny and Elmer Fudd in that initial cartoon. Bugs was always bugging bourgeois Elmer and Tashlin used his aggressive manner and his Brooklyn patois. If you want other models, consider the vaudeville comedians. Bugs and Elmer were strongly influenced by Abbott and Costello. So, I dunno. If a black crow hustling a brown fox is considered racist by whoever is sitting on those cartoons, I would wonder how it is that a black duck named Daffy is still in all the video stores.

-Clay Geerdes

UNDERGROUND SURREALIST 6
$3 PP. Mick Cusimano.
POB 2565
Cambridge, MA 02238.

...an intellectual, as opposed to a dutiful classroom performer but like the *upstart clerks* of Elizabethan times, is always self-made.

Mary McCarthy
HOW I GREW

GALEN #1 is $3 pp from G. Raymond Eddy, 1156 Panama Rd. SE, Carrollton, OH 44615-9659.

HOW MILLS COLLEGE WORKS

Misunderstandings among the various constituencies of a private college are built into its very structure. Unlike a business, no one owns a college, and no one has clear authority to command the loyalty of all its constituent groups. The trustees are people from the outside community who act as caretakers for the college, both financially and academically. They hire a president to run the college, who in turn hires the college officers. These administrators own allegiance to the trustees. They hire a staff to help run the college and the faculty. But the faculty members' loyalties are rarely to the administration. Their first loyalty is to their own academic discipline, then to an ideal of higher education and the intellectual welfare of their students. A tenured faculty member is quite autonomous. The students, meanwhile, are selected and admitted by the staff and faculty. They usually don't know the trustees or even people in the higher reaches of the administration. The students' first loyalty is to their own intellectual and professional well-being, and then to their friends and to the college culture they are helping to shape. Alumnae are former students who remain loyal to that educational milieu they found so beneficial and seek to preserve it for others.

Markate Daly. East Bay EXPRESS, 9/14/90.

VETERANIZATION

35 men attended Sarah Lawrence, a women's college, under the GI Bill in 1950. The women students called this invasion of their campus *veteranization* . Students who consorted with the soldiers were considered traitors and were ostracized their entire four years of college. At a reunion one of the men said: *the girls hated us. They wouldn't look at us. If they had to look at us, they wouldn't speak to us, and if they had to speak to us, by God, they'd be sure to say something nasty.* Another said: *We were the outsiders, the unwanted. We were intimidated. We shut up, we lived on the edge, we told each other lies. Each os us was alone, even now, coming back here to lie to each other again.* information excerpted from an article by Linnea Due. East Bay EXPRESS, 9/14/90.